

# Farming For the Future

The face of agriculture is changing rapidly, especially in rapidly urbanizing counties like King and Pierce. To be successful in this urbanizing environment existing farmers need new skills for growing, marketing and often selling their products themselves. Entering producers face enormous challenges. Those who live in the encroaching cities often have never lived in association with agricultural production and can benefit from learning



how to live near natural resource producers and away from the city.

The **Farming For the Future** (FFF) program will bring research, education, and demonstration programs and activities to help natural resources producers prepare for and continue to operate into

the future, ensuring a local base of environmental friendly sustainable natural resource production.

## Goals:

### Program Goals

- Farm School Program -- bringing entry and advanced level educational programs to smaller acreage farms operating at the urban fringe
- On-Farm Research Program that will recruit local farmers to participate in finding solutions to their needs

### 2004 Activities

- Cultivating Success farmer education series
- Research on Organic Options for Flea Beetle Control

## Cultivating Success:

“Sustainable Small Acreage Farming and Ranching”, “Agricultural Entrepreneurship”, and “On-Farm Apprenticeship” are 3 new educational opportunities to be offered by WSU King County Extension (WSU KCE) starting this fall! Through a partnership with WSU Small Farms Program and Cascade Harvest Coalition, WSU KCE received funding from Western Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (WSARE) program to present these courses in 2 counties each for 3 years. Currently, these courses are being offered in Pierce and Clallam Counties.

Taken as a series, participants first take a realistic look at what goals and resources they have and evaluate what type of enterprise is right for them. The “Agricultural Entrepreneurship” course builds on the developed idea by working with participants to develop a business and marketing plan by using the nationally recognized NxLevel’s “Tilling the Soil of Opportunity” curriculum. Having figured out what farm enterprise is right for them, looking to make sure it is financially realistic, the next step is to get some hands-on experience to see how it is really done. Through the Cultivating Success program, local farmers are identified who are willing to develop educational internships and host interns. These farmers are paired with students for internships that are tailored to the needs of the student, ranging from a couple of weeks to an entire summer.

In addition to offering this series of courses, the WSARE grant “Farming for the Future: Bringing the next generation of farmers to the land” will also adapt the courses for East Asian and Hispanic individuals. Plans are currently underway to offer the courses in Hmong in the near future.



Hands-on learning during a class fieldtrip.

*Photo D. Muehleisen*

## Bringing education and technical resources to King County farmers!

PyGanic	Trap Crop (Green Mustard)
Garlic Spray	
Brix Mix	
Control	
PyGanic	Control (No Trap Crop)
Garlic Spray	
Brix Mix	
Control	

Figure 1. Schematic of the experimental design showing the eight treatments per replicate. There are four sub-plot treatments (three sprays and one control) and two whole-plot treatments (presence of a trap crop and no trap crop).

replicate planted on May 20<sup>th</sup> and each subsequent replicate being planted three weeks later. Every week we will sample for the number of flea beetles in each treatment plot, and twice during the growing season we will assess how much damage is being done to the baby arugula. Results of the experiment will be available in November and will be presented at both the WSU research symposium in Portland in November and at the 2004 Western Washington Horticulture meeting in SeaTac.

*Brad Gaolach*

Brad Gaolach  
Interim County Director  
Agroecology Faculty  
206.205.3110  
gaolach@wsu.edu

WSU King County Extension  
919 SW Grady Way, Suite 120  
Renton, WA 98055-2980  
<http://www.metrokc.gov/wsu-ce>

### Research on Organic Options for Flea Beetle Control

Andrew Stout of Full Circle Organic Farm in Carnation partnered with Brad Gaolach, WSU King County Extension agent to conduct on-farm research on organic control options against flea beetles feeding on baby arugula. This project is funded by a Western Region Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (WSARE) grant through their Organic Research program.

This research project is testing three different organic sprays: PyGanic, a garlic spray, and Brix Mix along with a control (no control measures). These four treatments are crossed with the use of trap crop of green mustard, for a total of eight different treatments (see Figure 1). In other research, green mustard tends to attract flea beetles. This experimental design (referred to as a split-plot design) will see if the trap crop works to attract the pest away from the arugula crop and if any of the sprays have an additional effect.

These eight treatments will be planted along a single 500-foot by 5.5-foot bed with 30 rows of arugula, representing one replicate. There will be four replicates of the experimental treatment, planted across time with the first



Typical shot-gun hole feeding damage caused by flea beetles

*Photo B. Gaolach*

Partial funding for this project was provided by a WSARE grant to B. Gaolach and M. Ostrum and a WSARE grant to A. Stout and B. Gaolach